244 311 against the forest and in the middle along the boundaries of the individual plots (Plate 7). The groundnut plantation with its cleanness and unobstructed view will vividly remind the visitor of European vegetable fields; one groundnut plant next to the other shoots forth its many quadripartite leaves, irrigated by the ample moisture of the tropical rain, and here and there one can see the yellow blossoms shining through the leaves.

244 The planting and harvesting seasons of the groundnut are as follows.

First sowing: planted in September and the beginning of October; harvested towards the end of December.

Second sowing: planted in March and April; harvested in July and August.

The groundnut is thus planted before the rainy season and harvested during the following dry seasons.

244 476 The clearing and burning of farms, accordingly, is undertaken jointly by the men of the village in February, March, and again in July and August. /90/ The field is divided among the men, and they proceed to clear the larger tree trunks and branches out of the way, while the women clean up the farm and then place in the ground the seeds or the nuts which have already sprouted. They do this by digging a small hole with a hoe, throwing the seeds or, as the case may be, the nuts into it, and then pressing the soil down with their feet. The harvest begins when the leaves, with the exception of the topmost ones, are fairly well dried. The soil is loosened, and the women pick out the nuts and put them in plate-shaped baskets (dzâd).

244 Three years must elapse before groundnuts can again be grown in the same soil. The women have also noticed that the groundnut – which requires a certain amount of calcium in the soil – does not thrive everywhere, and hence they are in the habit of saying: "Let us not plant groundnuts again in this vicinity, for they do not thrive here." Like the majority of cultivated plants in the tropics, groundnuts draw practically no pests. They are harmed most of all by the following animals which eat their leaves: by the guib, Tragelaphus knutsoni Lemberg (nkŏk); and the dwarf goat, Neotragus batesi Winton (odzŏe). Furthermore,

244 773 is today; instead, women gathered its fruit in the bush. Once upon a time, there was a man who had no sister he could sell to obtain a wife for himself, nor did he have any other person who could help him to get married. He hit upon the idea of starting a huge ngon farm, and when the ngon was ripe many people came and bought the kernels. In this way he finally earned so much money that he had the purchase price for a girl. When other people, who likewise had no wives, heard about this, they began to imitate him and also married through the aid of the plant. Hence, it is said: "Oh, I see this plant like a girl (ngǒ́n), and therefore it shall be called ngǒ́n also, for if the man had had no ngon (ngǒn), he would not have been able to marry a girl [194] (ngṓ'n)." It should be noted that the two words differ in pitch: the word for the plant has falling pitch in Fang (ngô̌n), rising pitch in Jaunde (ngǒ̌n), whereas the word for girl has only high pitch (ngṓ'n). A narrative in the creation story is very similar.

244 Ngon is planted only once a year since its cultivation requires the period from April to December. In April, frequently long before, the bush is cut and burned. The ground, however, is not cleared, and everything is left lying just as it fell; at most the largest brushwood is removed from the connecting paths. Walking through a farm, especially along the plantation paths, is therefore quite a gymnastic feat. A ngon farm is often cleared [476 communally by the inhabitants of two neighboring villages who 602] belong to the same kin group. To the uninitiated, however, the boundaries are not discernible. They are indicated by trees that have been left standing or have fallen over and more rarely by lianas tied to the branches of tree trunks lying on the ground. It is astonishing that no boundary disputes arise.

244 462 In April, once the farm area has been burned over, the women go into the fields, and with their universal tool, the hoe, they plant the ngon seeds in the ground. The seeds must first have been soaked in water for a day, and two or three of them are planted in the same hole. Because of the tree trunks and the brush lying about, planting is hard work, and for this reason the men usually assist at the task, at least on the first day, equipped with /95/ /Fig. 53 appears here in the original text/ hoes and digging

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marcrobrachyum Herklots (nwɔ̃s I) and
Caridina togoensis Hlgd. (sín IV).

the larvae of dragon flies, and other kinds of lower animals. The total catch, however, is pretty large. Everything is eaten, and fishing is one of the women's chief enjoyments. Accordingly, time and time again one will see all the women of a village, from the oldest grandmother down to the smallest girl, wandering into the forest where they know of a suitable stream, and there they will splash around to their heart's content until late into the night. Frequently the entire company will not return to the village until the first owl causes the silent forest to resound with its eerie call. Then they come tramping home with their rich booty which can scarcely be contained in the women's long baskets (nkún). At a fish drive the women build fĭ̀ɔ (Fang. pfĭ̀ɔ (Ntum), or ebɛ̀ɛ̀tia, that is, piles of stones, little pieces of branches, or the like thrown into the water close to the bank, under which the fish gather. At the next fish drive they dam off the brook above and below this place and then catch the fish with no trouble at all after the water has run off.

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●476 The Jaunde use this method also in large streams and rivers that are not too deep. They do not construct any dams, however; instead, the fish are driven into shallow inlets or onto flooded forest ground. Of course it must be remembered that such fish drives can be carried out only by the concerted efforts of a number of people. Hence, the chief calls together the women from the neighborhood, goes with them to the place where they want to fish, and stations them in their places. In exchange, he receives a certain share; each woman must give him half of her catch, and an uneven number is rounded off upwards.

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2. Fish driving (abɔ̌ɔ̀lă)

This corresponds to the procedure of the Jaunde just described, but it takes place only at night and without damming the water in larger rivers.

329 [35] The stool is a valuable piece of household furniture, a luxury object, for which the natives are willing to spend some money. For this reason its manufacture is an important branch of wood [554] carving, and the makers of well-finished, artistically decorated stools are famous persons, much in demand. If they wanted to, they could make a considerable amount of money with their art, and they also could elevate the art itself, but with their congenital laziness, a special inducement is always required before they will take the trouble to start a new project. For example, a guest in the house of such an artist sees a beautifully carved stool there and says: "Oh, what a beautiful stool; you could make me one like that." Perhaps others have uttered the same wish, and so the artist finally pulls himself together, goes into the jungle, and cuts down [804] a trunk of the Apocynacea Alstonia congensis Engl. (ekūk), the only tree suitable for the manufacture of stools. He must choose a trunk which -- after the bark has been pulled off -- has the same diameter as the proposed stool /221/ (Fig. 172). He takes the trunk with him to the village and cuts it into about five to seven disks as thick as the stool is intended to be tall. Then with his cutlass he draws a line around approximately the middle, and this line indicates the lower edge of the seat. From there he cuts three radial grooves downward, deepens them with an adz (ngbwík IV), Figure 173, and in this way forms three legs. Then the seat is made smooth and held over the fire until it becomes nice and brown. [804] The edge is rubbed clean with the rough leaves of the Ficus exasperata Vahl (ekōkō' Fang, akō Ntum) (1). The edge and the

1. Root kō, "to rub"; compare a-kō-k, "grindstone."

[386 531] legs are colored with redwood and dried for an hour in the sun; finally they are decorated with carved patterns, an artistic addition which is not everywhere uniformly successful. /Fig. 172 appears here in the original text./

302 476 435 Ordinarily a stool maker finishes from two to three pieces in one day. The price is so low (two spears, the equivalent of 14 pfennigs, apiece) that it is difficult to conceive how the man can work for it.

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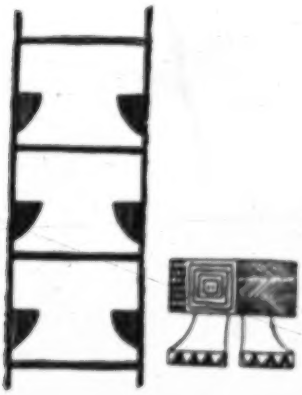

Fig. 172. Stages in Making a Stool.

322 The explanation lies in a kind of principle of reciprocity, a princi-
476 ple clearly stated in the educational precepts to be discussed in a
435 later section /Ed., Vol II/, that is, the seller counts upon the fact that later he will need his client who is in turn a specialist in the manufacture of some kind of article (basketwork plates, for instance), and he then expects to be treated in the same lenient manner. As a result of the excessive division of labor, everyone is dependent upon everyone else, and this dependence keeps the prices down. Wherever this dependence is absent, the prices go up. Europeans, for instance, with whom such a silent agreement does not exist, pay considerably more, ten or twenty times more, and at the same time they have to put up with inferior work as well.

[463]

322 Moreover, the sale of objects manufactured for household use
434 is not regarded as an enterprise for profit. When I asked a stool
554 maker whom I had befriended what his business brought in, he first

[40]

Fig. 173. Adz.